**Amendments to the Claims**

Please replace the prior listing of claims with the following listing:

1 (Previously presented) Restraining-apparatus for coupling at least two users comprising at least one spine member with first and second nodes connected to the spine member at opposite ends of the spine member, each of the first and second nodes having first and second ends, and having connection devices for connecting and disconnecting a respective spine member at each end of the node, each node having at least one lateral attachment member releasably coupled to each node, each lateral attachment member being adapted to couple a respective user to a node of the spine member, the spine member having a first vertical plane, and a second lateral plane, the spine member having a stiffening member to enhance rigidity in said first vertical plane, whereby the spine member is rigid in said vertical plane but wherein the spine member has a higher degree of flexibility in said lateral plane than in said vertical plane, the apparatus having a releasable fastener device for coupling each user to a respective attachment member, wherein each releasable fastener device is coupled to a respective lateral attachment member on each of the nodes.

2 (Previously presented) Apparatus as claimed in claim 1, where each spine member is an elongate member selected from the group consisting of a rod and a plate-from which the lateral attachment members extend sideways from each side of each spine member.

3 (Previously presented) Apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein each spine member is inextensible along its long axis.

4 (Previously presented) Apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein each spine member has a degree of lateral resilience.

5 (Previously presented) Apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein each spine member is at least partially formed from a material selected from the group comprising plastics material, composite material, and resilient materials.

6 (Cancelled).

7 (Previously presented) Apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the stiffening member is at least partially formed from a material selected from the group consisting of plastics, metals and composite materials.

8 (Cancelled)

9 (Previously presented) Apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the attachment members comprise elongate arms extending laterally from each spine member.

10 (Previously presented) Apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the arms have properties selected from the group consisting of flexibility, axial extensibility, and compressibility.

11 (Previously presented) Restraining apparatus for coupling at least two users comprising at least one spine member with at least two lateral attachment members adapted to couple respective first and second users to the spine member, the spine member having a first vertical plane, and a second lateral plane, the spine member having a stiffening member to enhance rigidity in said first vertical plane, whereby the spine member is rigid in said vertical plane but wherein the spine member has a higher degree of flexibility in said lateral plane than in said vertical plane, the apparatus having a releasable fastener device for coupling each user to a respective attachment member, wherein the attachment members comprise elongate arms extending laterally from the spine member and releasably secured thereto, and wherein each arm is adapted to rotate around an axis passing through the spine member.

12 (Previously presented) Apparatus as claimed in claim 11, wherein at least two arms are provided and said at least two arms are pivotable with respect to each other.

13 (Previously presented) Apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the attachment members are rigid, and wherein respective attachment members extend from different sides of the spine member.

14 (Previously presented) Apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein attachment members are staggered along the spine member.

15 (Previously presented) Apparatus as claimed in claim 1, including harnesses worn by each user and wherein the attachment members are adapted to attach to the harnesses.

16 (Original) Apparatus as claimed in claim 15, wherein the attachment members are adapted to attach releasably to the harnesses.

17 (Previously presented) Apparatus as claimed in claim 1, incorporating luminous, reflective and/or light emitting devices.

18 (Currently amended) A method of securing or restraining at least two users together, comprising harnessing each of the users to a common spine member via an respective attachment member, the apparatus having a releasable fastener device for coupling each user to a respective attachment member, the spine member having first and second nodes connected to the spine member at opposite ends of the spine member, each of the first and second nodes having first and second ends, and having connection devices for connecting and disconnecting a respective spine member at each end of the node, each node having at least one attachment member releasably coupled to each node, each ~~lateral~~ attachment member being adapted to couple a respective user to a node of the spine member, each spine member having a first vertical plane, and a second lateral plane, and a stiffening member to enhance rigidity in said first vertical plane, whereby each spine member is rigid in said vertical plane but wherein each spine member has a higher degree of flexibility in said lateral plane than in said vertical plane, and wherein each user is harnessed to a respective attachment member via the releasable fastener device.

19 (Cancelled).

20 (Previously presented) Restraining apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the releasable fastener comprises a male portion with a projecting part, and a female portion with a socket, wherein the projecting part of the male portion couples with the socket on the female portion, thereby releasably fastening the two portions together.

21 (Previously presented) Restraining apparatus as claimed in claim 20, wherein the releasable fastener comprises a resilient locking device resisting disconnection of the two portions from one another.

22 (Cancelled).

23 (Cancelled).

24 (Cancelled)